

# Historical booklet about Slovakia



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## **Three important historical events from the 20th century**

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# Important events to the 20<sup>th</sup> century Great Moravia

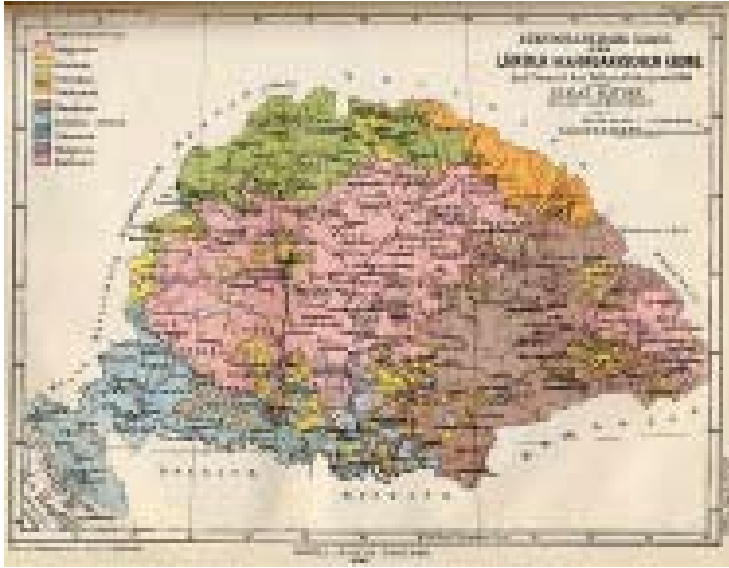
St. Cyril and Method are unquestionably one of the most important personalities in the history of Slovak nation.

Cyril, known also as Constantine, had studied philosophy and literature and later he taught these. Method had developed sense of practical things, he studied law and became chief of the Byzantine County where people were Slavs. The brothers knew the Slavic language and that is why they were invited to Great Moravia. (Rastislav – Great Moravian's ruler requested the Emperor Michael III. to order „a teacher and a bishop“ and other missionaries for Slavs who would report about the Christian religion in the national language of the Slavs.

The brothers created the first Slavic alphabet – called glagolica, translated the Bible and other religious books into Slavic language, they also created the Slavonic liturgical language.



# Kingdom of Hungary



Slovakia was part of the Kingdom of Hungary from the 10th century to 1918. Hungary was recognized as a Catholic Apostolic Kingdom under Saint Stephen I.

Most castles in Slovakia were owned by two powerful oligarchs: Amade Aba and Matthew Csák in the end of 13th century. The first university in the territory of Slovakia **Academia Istropolitana** was founded in 1465. The Kingdom was under the power of Ottomans from the 16th century to the 18th century. The present day capital of Slovakia Bratislava became the capital and the coronation city of Hungary for this period. Ottoman – Habsburg wars finished with the treaty of Karlowitz in 1699.



# Codification of the Slovak literary language

The first trying of codification of the Slovak literary language was in the 16th century. Anton Bernolák, a Catholic priest codified a Slovak language based on the Western Slovakian dialect but containing also some central Slovak elements. The language is often called the Bernolák language. Bernolák's important works: Slovak Grammar and Slovak-Czech-Latin-German-Hungarian Dictionary were published in this language. Slovak Catholics used Bernolák's language but the Protestants would still write in Czech language.

The Slovak literary language was codified by Ľudovít Štúr in 1843. The new language was based on the Central Slovakian dialect. The first Slovak grammar of the new language, *Náuka reči slovenskej*, was published by Ľudovít Štúr in 1846.

Anton Bernolák on a former 200 Slovak crown banknote



# Important events from the 20<sup>th</sup> century Czechoslovakia



Czechoslovakia existed from October 1918 (from the end of WW I.) until 1992. Before 1918 Czechoslovakia had been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Its founders were Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, Edvard Beneš and Milan Rastislav Štefánik. The first president became Masaryk. It

was a multiethnic state joining Czechs, Slovaks, Germans, Hungarians, Russians and others.

Until 1938, Czechoslovakia was a democratic republic. In 1938 Nazi Germany took over Czechoslovakia and it was Hitler's puppet state until the end of World War II. Czechoslovakia was created once again with communists' help and it was led until 1989 by them.

This rule ended during the peaceful Velvet Revolution. The Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic went their separate ways after January 1, 1993, an event sometimes called the Velvet Divorce.



# Socialism in Czechoslovakia

The golden age of the socialism in Czechoslovakia can be put between the sixties and the eighties. When Alexander Dubček found his way onto the communist party's position as secretary general in January 1968, the party's and the system's transformation began. It was an experiment onto the democratisation of the economy, the party and the state. In August, the teams of Warsaw Pact moved into Czechoslovakia, the reform attempts were eliminated and the party leaders were arrested. More movements came into existence in the seventies. One of the most considerable ones was Charter 77, it protested against the Czechoslovakian violation of the human rights. In 1989 the Velvet Revolution restored democracy.

The trend of sixties, seventies and eighties:

Jeans and flared trousers

Rubik's Cube

Roller skates



# The European Union

The European Union is an economic and political union of 27 member democratic states (in 2009). The European Union is set up with the aim of ending the frequent wars between neighbours. Important institutions and bodies of the EU include the Council of the European Union, European Parliament, European Court of Justice, European Commission.

Slovakia has been a member of the European Union with other 9 states since May 2004.

Slovakia adopted the euro on 1 January 2009, replacing its previous currency, the Slovak „koruna“. Among post socialist countries Slovakia was the second after Slovenia to do so. Slovakia is the 16th state where euro is used.





# Important characters

## Juraj Jánošík



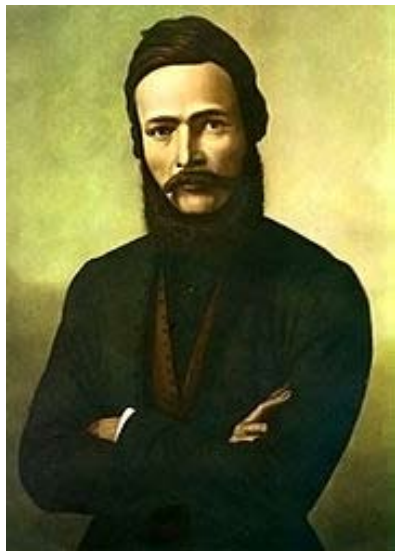
January 25, 1688, Terchová  
March 17, 1713, Liptovský Mikuláš

Juraj Jánošík, called the Slovak Robin Hood, became the greatest Slovak legend pictured in many films, paintings, literary and dramatic works. “He took from the rich and gave to the poor” is the famous statement associated with him.

He was born and grew up in the village Terchova in 1688. He fought with the Kuruc insurgents. After the lost Battle of Trenčín, Jánošík was recruited by the Habsburg army. He escaped and was a member of a robber group afterwards. Later Jánošík became the leader of the group for a short time. He was imprisoned and executed in Liptovský Mikuláš in 1713.



# Ľudovít Štúr



October 29, 1815, Uhrovec  
January 12, 1856, Modra

Ľudovít Štúr was the leader of the Slovak national revival in 19th century and the author of the Slovak language standard which found basis to the contemporary Slovak literary language.

Štúr came from a teaching family and received his basic education at home. He learned German and Hungarian in Rabe. At the end of August 1844 Štúr took part in the creation of the Slovak cultural society Tatrin which asked him to create the new Slovak grammar.

Towards the end of his life Štúr lived in Modra (a small town close to Bratislava) where he concentrated on literary activities. The police investigated him and he could not leave Modra without police authorisation. At the end of 1855 he accidentally fell and shot himself while out hunting. As a result of his injuries he died on 12 January 1856.



# Milan Rastislav Štefánik



Milan Rastislav Štefánik was born on July 21, 1880 in Košariská (Kingdom of Hungary). He was a Slovak politician, a diplomat, a general, a pilot, and the co-founder of the Czechoslovakian state. He was also a scientist and an astronomer. Štefánik studied astronomy at Charles University in Prague, worked in the observatory in Meudon close to Paris, participated in many expeditions to solar eclipses all around the world, built an observatory in Ta-

hiti and was awarded several scientific prizes.

During World War I, he was a general of the French army. As a pilot, he flew a total of 30 missions to enemy territories. He survived them but some years later, when he wanted to return home, had an accident near Bratislava in 1919. He died in that air crash. The reason for the plane crash is still disputed.

Bratislava Airport is named after him.



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